



Craig Whittaker MP

CALDER VALLEY

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Housing Development on Green Belt Land

Thank you for contacting me about development on the Green Belt.

I am exceptionally fond of the British countryside and especially our spectacular surroundings here in the Calder Valley.

While I do not want to speculate about the contents of the Budget, I do know that this is a very important issue for many people; I understand that the Treasury is aware of the strength of feeling surrounding it. I will be following the Chancellor's speech closely for any announcements in this area.

While it is up to local authorities to determine the development of new homes through local plans, I would like to reassure you that steps have been taken to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development.

The Housing White Paper, published earlier this year, emphasised the Government's continued commitment to protecting the Green Belt. Ministers want to amend and add to national policy to make clear the following principles:

- Green Belt boundaries should only be amended in exceptional circumstances, when local authorities can demonstrate they have fully examined all other reasonable options for meeting their identified housing requirements;
- where land is removed from the Green Belt, local planning strategies should require the impact of the loss of Green Belt land to be offset.

Planning policy guarantees strong protection for National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Sites of Special Scientific Interest. The Green Belt also enjoys protection against erosion from caravan and traveller sites. Moreover, the Government has an ambitious programme to bring brownfield land back into use in England and is working closely with local authorities to drive this forward. This will ensure that development is prioritised on brownfield sites rather than at the expense of our countryside.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP